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ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY OF BUCHAREST

Journal de Tehran
Tehran, 6 Dec 1953

The Astronomical Observatory of Bucharest was established in 1908 by a group of scientists headed by Professor Nicola Coculescu. Until 1921, the observatory was an annex of the Meteorological Institute.

Today, the observatory includes two sections: an astronomical department and a seismological department, the latter created in 1935.

The astronomical department is equipped with a transit circle with a 19-centimeter diameter and a focal distance of 2.35 meters. The observatory is equipped with two precision astronomical clocks adjusted to constant temperature. In the observation rooms, there is also a series of subsidiary instruments for noting sidereal time and for registering civil time of the international standard time zone of Eastern Europe.

The visual and photographic astronomical telescope is located in the telescope dome. Its two lenses have a diameter of 38 centimeters and a focal distance of 6 meters. There is also a Zeiss photometer equipped with a photo-electric cell.

In addition, the observatory is furnished with radio receiving equipment for time signals, a machine to measure astrophotographical charts, and various accessory instruments.

The observatory engages in various astronomical activities. Among current research projects, it is conducting observations on planets, comets, variable stars, and double stars.

The observatory participated in the operations to determine geographic latitudes and longitudes.

The observatory is working in close cooperation with the Institute of Theoretical Astronomy of Leningrad, which is part of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. The astronomy department of the observatory is taking part in cataloguing distant stars.

Recently, a delegation of Rumanian astronomers, headed by Prof C. Dimitrescu, director of the observatory, visited Warsaw and Krakow to meet with Polish astronomers.

The cellars or caves of the seismological section of the observatory are located 5 meters underground; three sections are devoted to astronomical and seismic instruments. There are five other seismological stations scattered throughout the country. The seismological section of the observatory publishes a regular monthly bulletin, which is sent throughout the world.

The staff of the seismological section has published studies on the various earthquakes, particularly those which have taken place in Rumania. They have made an important contribution toward the establishment of characteristics and traits of the epicenter of the Vrancea Mountain Range. This section has set up its own workshop for the construction of seismic instruments.

In recent years, a large number of students have been showing a great interest in astronomy and are doing practical work at the observatory.

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